

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 11 are pending. Claims 9 and 10 are currently cancelled. Claims 1 to 8 are currently amended. Support for the amendment to claim 1 can be found, for example, in originally filed claim 9. The amendments to the remaining claims correct minor typographical and/or grammatical errors. Claim 11 has been added. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

§ 102 Rejections

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, and 9 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by German Patent No. DE 101 60 376 to Mueller ("Mueller").

Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to recite "wherein said light source is a lighting device comprising (i) a light guide having a front face to which said license plate can be removably mounted, a back face opposite thereto, and one or more side faces and (ii) a light source for illuminating said light guide arranged along at least a portion of at least one of said side faces." Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claim 1 overcomes the Examiner's rejection. Mueller describes the use of an electroluminescent layer as the light source. Mueller does not describe the use of a "light guide" as is recited in amended independent claim 1. Because claims 3, 5, and 6 add additional elements to amended independent claim 1, applicant submits that they are also patentable.

Consequently, applicant believes that the rejection of claims 1, 3, 5, and 6 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Mueller has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

§ 103 Rejections

Claims 2 and 10 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mueller in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,282,026 to Dreyer et al. ("Dreyer"). The Examiner admits that Mueller does not describe how the retroreflective elements are formed, but states that Dreyer describes the process recited in claims 2 and 10. Applicant has cancelled claim 10, and applicant believes that claim 2 is patentable for the reasons provided above with respect to amended independent claim 1.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mueller in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,122,902 to Benson ("Benson"). The Examiner admits that Mueller does not describe the separation surfaces as being curved, but states that Benson describes this. Applicant believes that claim 4 is patentable for the reasons provided above with respect to amended independent claim 1.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mueller in view of German Patent No. DE 20218626 to Tietze et al. ("Tietze"). The Examiner admits that Mueller does not describe the retroreflective sheet as being adhered to the support on a side opposite the prismatic elements, but states that Tietze describes this. Applicant believes that claim 7 is patentable for the reasons provided above with respect to amended independent claim 1.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mueller in view of Tietze and further in view of German Patent No. DE 10247708 to Fitzke et al. ("Fitzke"). The Examiner admits that neither Mueller nor Tietze describes embossing as a method of forming the indicia, but states that Fitzke describes this. Applicant believes that claim 8 is patentable for the reasons provided above with respect to amended independent claim 1.

The rejection of claims 2, 4, 7, 8, and 10 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Examination and reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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